



FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE



A Little Boy's Christmas Wishes



I'd give a nickel and a dime—
I'd give most all I got,
If every year at Christmas time,
I just could eat a lot;
I think old Santa's 'bout the size
For fifteen tarts and fourteen pies!

I wish I was a elephant,
A mile around the waist;
Because no human power can't
Eat pudding 'tough to taste;
We just can eat a little scrap
And then we have to quit and nap.

I wish I was a tall pirate,
With 'bout a mile of hair—
I'd make the others shiver and shudder,
But I'd get square, I 'swee—
For I could feel the ice cream slide
About an hour, down inside.

I'd like to be a kitten, too,
So I could stay awake,
And watch the tree the whole night
Through
And nibble nuts and cake;
It almost makes me have to weep—
To waste the night time fast asleep!

I wish I was a deer so I
Could pull old Santa's sled
Across the snow-clouds in the sky,
With big horns on my head;
I think it's just a mean old shame
That boys can't always play some game.

But then I wonder just a bit,
If we could play and play—
Now wouldn't we get tired of it,
And beg to rest all day?
And so I guess it's 'ranged alright,
To play all day and sleep all night.

In Santa Claus' Workshop

THIS is a story of Santa Claus' workshop or, rather, of two of the queer little old men who, it is said, work there the year round, with thousands of their kind, making toys for old Santa Claus to distribute on Christmas Eve. One of them is named Woossem and the other is Ichl.

Now, Woossem was about four times as large as Ichl, and yet Ichl was the older—by thousands of years. Woossem rather prided himself upon having a long white beard just like Santa Claus', and poor Ichl had only a pig-tail knot of hair which stuck straight out from the back of his head, the rest of it being as hard and round and devoid of hair as a billiard ball.

Woossem was fat and ruddy-polly and his "mumms" often got in his way; while Ichl was so thin and dried-up that frequently he had to feel of himself to make certain he hadn't blown away.

Woossem was an expert woodcarver and, under his sharp knife, plain blocks of wood changed into wonderful dolls and horses and toy-houses and sailboats and goodness knows how many nice things.

Ichl was a needle-worker. That is to say, with his spindle-like knees doubled up under him tailor-fashion and a huge pair of horn spectacles on his long, sharp nose, he would sew merrily away all day long on such pleasing things as skating caps and sweaters and neckties and warm woolen mittens and ever so many other articles which Santa deemed worthy of a place in his huge bag when he set out from Santa-Claus-Land on the night before Christmas.

One day, so a little fairy told me,

the two of them were working away like mad, for Christmas was but a short while off, and so many, many children expected presents. Woossem was putting the finishing touches on a sailboat—and admiring his work vastly. Ichl, cross-legged as usual on his table, had his nose so close to the silk muffer he was making that it seemed he must surely sew the end of it right into the muffer unless he were very, very careful how he pried his needle.

"I wish I knew what little boy will get this sailboat," said Woossem, holding it up and looking at it proudly. "Maybe I shouldn't say it, but I just bet I'm the best sailboat-maker in the whole world!"

Sniffle-sniffle-sniffle! Ichl always sniffled before he spoke; somehow, it seems, he couldn't speak without sniffing first. "Huh! You just hate yourself, don't you, Woossem?" he cackled.

Woossem wheeled about. "Sonly a just pride in my work—sonly a just pride!" he declared. "You couldn't carve a sailboat, Ichl, not if you—not even if you sat on a wave in the middle of the ocean and had stashed the sailor right beside you to tell you where to carve!"

Sniffle-sniffle-sniffle! "Is that so? Well, maybe not, Woossem, but I'd like to see you make a muffer like this beautiful one I'm making. Huh! You

I know my knife will slip and cut my finger off—and then just think of the lots of little children who have been waiting for sailboats but will have to try to be content with those old muffers of yours instead!"

On Christmas morning, little Wellington Delaney, spoiled child of fabulously wealthy parents, was led into the room where his Christmas tree and his presents had been set out for his inspection. He was a happy and excited little boy. The tree was a marvel. And his presents were so numerous that it took him fully an hour to look at them. Then he began all over again.

But, somehow, the sailboat—the very one into which old Woossem had put his Christmas Cheer—did not seem to appeal to him very much. And no wonder, since, beside his other marvelous gifts, it seemed very small and cheap and uninteresting.

Spyem, you may be sure, was peering out from his hiding place and saw every move.

In another part of the same city little Archie Roberts awoke with his eyes wide open—despite the fact that he hadn't closed them so many hours ago for he had tried to keep awake to see Santa Claus come down the chimney. He, too, had been plentifully supplied with presents. And among them was Ichl's muffer.



Woossem Was Putting The Finishing Touches On A Sailboat.

couldn't even bite off the thread without chewing off your whiskers! Who wants to make an old sailboat anyway? Boys and girls, too, like my muffers and ties and sweaters and ribbons lots more than they do your old sailboats and things!"

Instantly old Woossem was on his feet, his white beard shaking from side to side—a sure sign that he was angry. "Is that so?" he cried. "Is—that—so? Well, we shall see—what we shall see!"

"Once in a blue moon," said Woossem solemnly, "I'm granted no work-ers, you remember, to send out a Christmas cheer with something we have made with our own hands. Well, now I'll put one in this sailboat—and you do the same with that old muffer you're making. Then, we'll get Spyem to keep track of them and let us know what happens. He'll tell us whether the children like my sailboat or your muffer the better!"

Sniffle-sniffle-sniffle. "Sailboats are out of date now," cackled Ichl, glancing slyly at Woossem. "Nowadays it's motorboats or submarines. You're way behind the times, Woossem. But muffers are always in style—imagine a boy or girl on a cold, windy, snowy day going out without a muffer! Huh!"

Old Woossem shook his head, but refrained from making the retort that was on the tip of his tongue and said evenly: "Shall we put it to the test with Christmas Cheer, eh?"

"Sure," agreed Ichl, for his customary sniffles. "I'll wash mine in right now." And, with that, he crumbled the muffer up in his hands, closed his eyes a moment and buried his face in it, muttering at the same time certain mystic words.

Woossem made a tiny hole with his knife in the inside of the sailboat, closed his eyes, bent down and whispered the same magic words into it.

Sniffle-sniffle-sniffle. "Wouldn't the children be surprised if they knew about our Christmas Cheer?" Ichl laughed gently. "But, bless their hearts, it's something they can't see and, indeed, something they know nothing about! They only feel it! And they don't know why!"

"How you do cackle!" snapped old Woossem. "You talk more than you work! Here, we'd better tell Spyem about this tonight so he'll be on the lookout. I'll see him as soon as the bell rings—or if not then at Mrs. Santa Claus' festival for us later on!"

Sniffle-sniffle-sniffle. "Wouldn't children down in the World give a lot to know about Spyem?" Ichl went gaily on. "Guess they never heard of him and how he watches to see whether or not they like what Santa Claus brought them—and of how he then reports to Santa Claus himself. Guess if they did, there are lots of them who wouldn't turn up their noses at what they get!"

"Please be quiet!" commanded Woossem. "You make me so nervous

But Archie gave it scant notice. It was just something to wear and, oh, well, he much preferred something to play with!

Spyem arrived just in time to see him toss the muffer indifferently aside, and then he hurried on to the next house.

A full month later Spyem came in one day on old Woossem and Ichl as they were already busily working away on the toys for—next Christmas!

Now, strange to say, you couldn't see Spyem at all. He was invisible. Perhaps Woossem and Ichl saw him. But the fairy who told me about it, said she couldn't see him. But she could hear him speak.

Sniffle-sniffle-sniffle, went Ichl. But before he could speak, Woossem had said it for him: "Did you see what happened to the sailboat and the muffer, Spyem?"

Spyem laughed. "I should say I did!" he answered. "And I also have lots of things to say to you—to both of you! Now don't interrupt me."

"Your sailboat, Woossem," Spyem continued, "went to a rich little boy who had so many presents that he

AESOP'S RETOLD

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HORSE AND SOLDIER.



Again the man to war was called,
With this poor horse, so jaded,
No longer prancing on the road,
But forward forced with heel and goad;
And when they into battle went,
He fell, with all his strength fore-
spent.
An outcry fierce the soldier made
And, cursing, struck him with his blade.
Replied the horse, "No fault of mine
Hath brought us to this state supreme;
For having made me but an ass,
Your own destruction came to pass."

A MAN of old to war was sent;
Upon a faithful horse he went
That carried him thro' flood and storm,
And bravely did his part perform:
Then from the field of battle far
Returned him safe, without a scar.
Ah, should he not have loved this steed
That served him well in time of need?
Ingrate, he made him carry freight
From early morn till evening late,
He gave him not enough to eat,
Of chaff instead of corn and wheat.

wasn't particularly impressed by it." Ichl started to sniffle delightedly; but a stern glance from Spyem stopped him right in the middle of a sniffle.

"So," Spyem went on, "he put it aside, unloved, for all of Christmas Day. Then, in the evening, as the cook was leaving for the night he suddenly remembered that she had a little boy at home. So he hurried downstairs and gave her the sailboat to take home to him. She was very grateful and very pleased, but not nearly so much so as was her son who, only today, was pulling it in a big wash-tub full of water and having a fine time with it."

Old Woossem grinned and looked proud.

"And your muffer, Ichl, did not particularly please the little boy for whom Santa Claus left it on Christmas Eve. He thought it was just something more to wear, so he tossed it aside and played with his toys. The very next day, as he was going out of the house, snugly wrapped, he saw a little newsboy standing by the front gate. The poor lad was nearly blue with cold. So the little boy suddenly turned, went back in the house and presently came out again with the muffer which he gave to the newsboy."

"That urchin was so amazed that he forgot to say 'Thank you.' But he hurried home with the muffer to show it to his mamma and his small brothers. And ever since, would you believe it, all of them take turns wearing it around their necks when they go out. They think it is beautiful. So."

"Then I win, don't I, Spyem?" cried Ichl—and this time he was so excited that he forgot all about sniffing.

"Huh! That newsboy has more

brothers than—" Spyem shook his head. "Neither of you wins," he said slowly. "And yet, both of you do. You have simply mistaken the real nature of Christmas Cheer. And I don't blame you, since this is the first time either of you have been old enough to use it."

"Christmas Cheer, as we call it here in Santa-Claus-Land, is a glorious, beautiful thing. But it does not work as you two imagine it does. Instead, when mysteriously put into a present (as you two did put it) it works upon the boy or girl who receives that present and urges him to presently give the present to some other boy or girl who hasn't many presents—sometimes none—for Christmas."

"And then, on its next owner, and its next and next and so on to do the same. Hence we call it a gift with the real Christmas Cheer, since it makes so many people happy—which is the real spirit of Christmas!"

W H O-O-O-O! Who-o-o-o-o! Who-o-o-o-o! The north wind as it rustled the trees out in the forest, for it was a cold day in December.

The wood-man, with his axe shouldered, was trudging through that forest when he heard two of the trees in conversation, and he stopped to listen.

"I'm cold," said the little tree, "though I am fir from head to foot. It is a very cold day, is it not?" he asked the Oak.

"They'll make it warm for you soon enough," sneered the big Oak. "I have seen the wood-man look at me and nod times lately. I wouldn't give much for your life!"

"I'm glad of that," returned the fir. "I want Santa to be pleased with me. I tried hard to grow. Do you think I've branched out much since last year?"

"Ho-he-he!" laughed the mighty Oak. "You and the rest of your family are too green to live. You should have put on your brown coat as I have done, and then you might have lived to a ripe old age."

"I consider it a great honor to be allowed to gladden the hearts of little folks," laughed the fir, "and the sooner the wood-man comes the better I'll like it."

The wood-man waited to hear no more. With one blow of the axe he felled the fir, and merrily bore it home on his shoulder, all the while the tree whispered pleasant things into his ear about Christmas.

December 14, 1835—Great fire in New York.

December 16, 1773—Boston Tea Party.

December 17, 1807—Whittier's birthday.

December 18, 1787—New Jersey admitted to the Union.

December 19, 1848—Louis Napoleon elected President of France.

December 20, 1850—South Carolina seceded.

December 22, 1620—Landing of the "Mayflower" at Plymouth.

December 25—Christmas day.

December 25-26, 1776—Battle of Trenton.

December 28, 1859—Birth of Woodrow Wilson.

December 29, 1778—Battle of Savannah.

December 30, 1865—Birth of Rudyard Kipling.

December 28, 1908—Violent earthquakes in Southern Italy and Sicily, over 100,000 lives lost.

December 29, 1845—Texas admitted to the Union.

December 31, 1863—West Virginia admitted to the Union.

The jewel for the month of December is the turquoise, which stands for prosperity.

The flower is the Holly, which stands for sentiment and foresight.

December 16, 1770—Birth of Beethoven, composer.

December 2, 1823—Monroe doctrine declared.

December 2, 1804—Napoleon Bonaparte crowned Emperor of France.

December 2, 1848—Francis Josef declared Emperor of Austria.

December 2, 1805—Battle of Austerlitz.

December 3, 1818—Illinois admitted to the Union.

December 4, 1795—Birth of Thomas Carlyle.

December 4, 1783—Washington's farewell to his officers in New York.

December 6, 1790—United States Government moved from New York to Philadelphia.

December 7, 1815—Marshal Ney, of French Army, executed.

December 7, 1787—Delaware admitted to the Union.

December 9, 1608—Birth of John Milton.

December 10, 1817—Mississippi admitted to the Union.

December 11, 1816—Indiana admitted to the Union.

December 12, 1787—Pennsylvania admitted to the Union.

December 14, 1811—South Pole reached by Captain Amundsen.

December 14, 1793—Death of George Washington.

December 14, 1813—Alabama admitted to the Union.

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